

fiscal year 2005, Minnesota received \$6.9 million from Byrne JAG funding alone.

Even though ATP was created to fund research that cannot attract private financing, a Government Accountability Office study found that 63 percent of ATP grant recipients never even sought private financing. Quite simply, ATP funnels taxpayer money to billion dollar corporations that do not need government subsidies for research and development.

The National Association of Attorneys General, National District Attorneys Association, National Narcotics Officers Association Coalition, and National Sheriffs Association have all expressed support for the Coburn amendment.

Earlier this year, Mike Hatch, the Attorney General of Minnesota, co-signed a letter to Congressional leadership. The letter stated that funding cuts for law enforcement grants "will devastate state law enforcement efforts—especially drug enforcement—if they are not restored." In the absence of this amendment, Byrne JAG funding will be cut by \$6.5 million relative to 2005 levels.

In Minnesota, at least 5 percent of high school students have admitted to using methamphetamines at least once. A July 2005 survey of law enforcement agencies conducted by the National Association of Counties found that "Meth is the leading drug-related local law enforcement problem in the country."

According to the same survey, 70 percent of responding officials stated that other crimes, including robberies and burglaries, had increased because of methamphetamine use.

The Methamphetamine Hot Spots program, part of COPS, addresses a broad array of law enforcement initiatives pertaining to the investigation of methamphetamine use and trafficking, trains law enforcement officials, collects intelligence, and works to discover, interdict, and dismantle clandestine drug laboratories. This amendment would ensure that this program receives the funding it needs to tackle the serious problems associated with methamphetamine use and distribution.

This amendment also increases funding for the National Weather Service, and directs the additional funding towards the Inland and Coastal Hurricane Monitoring and Prediction program and the Hurricane and Tornado Broadcast Campaign.

Senator Norm Coleman of Minnesota is a co-sponsor of this amendment.

Mr. COBURN. This is an area where there will be some controversy. I don't know if we will win the vote on this amendment. If we start looking at the human faces of what we, as Government, can do versus what business on its own can do and venture capital on its own can do, what we will see is that our parochialism needs to stop in terms of benefits to limited numbers, and we need to increase benefits to the masses. What I am asking by this grant is to eliminate a program that is marginal at best and put the money where it is going to make a tremendous difference in people's lives, born and unborn. It is my hope the Senate will concur with the amendment and that we can have a bipartisan vote to do it. It is also my hope that this is the first of many amendments, as we continue the appropriations process, where we will start making the hard choices—not easy, not black and white, but gray—that are necessary for us to meet the

growing needs of the Federal Government in this time of tremendous tragedy along our gulf coast and in a time of tragedy for our budget.

It is my hope we won't vote this based on what we feel our own State gets but what is best for the country and how we move forward.

I yield the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 1668

Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to speak on behalf of my amendment that would allocate \$2 million for methamphetamine education programs in our Nation's schools. I am very pleased that this measure has been included in the underlying bill, and I would like to take a moment to explain why this amendment is so important.

Over the August recess I traveled throughout New Mexico to discuss the challenges local communities are facing in confronting problems associated with meth. I met with law enforcement, health officials, prosecutors, citizens, and State and local representatives. At each place I visited—Moriarty, Roswell, Farmington, Belen, Santa Fe, Taos, and Albuquerque—the message was clear: methamphetamine is the most serious drug threat that we are facing and we must do more to fight the spread of this epidemic.

Indeed, the National Association of Counties recently released a report that found that 58 percent of counties surveyed viewed meth as their largest drug problem, and 70 percent of law enforcement reported that robberies and burglaries have substantially increased due to meth use in their communities. And according to the DEA, there were some 16,000 meth lab seizures last year, up from 912 in 1995. In New Mexico, the number of labs seized increased fivefold from 1998 to 2003. The drug is particularly harmful because of its impact on the user, the likelihood of exposure to chemicals during the drug production process, and the high cleanup costs associated with dismantling labs.

We must address this issue in a comprehensive manner by reducing domestic production, providing law enforcement with the tools they need to fight the meth epidemic, disrupting the importation of meth or its precursor chemicals into the United States, and by developing effective education and treatment programs.

With regard to limiting domestic production, I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Combat Meth Act, which was introduced by Senators TALENT and FEINSTEIN, and included in the CJS appropriations bill. The bill would curb production by moving pseudoephedrine, the primary ingredient in meth and a common ingredient in cold medicines, behind the pharmacy counter. After Oklahoma enacted a similar law meth production dropped by over 80 percent in 1 year. The bill also provides additional funding for law enforcement and creates a research and training center aimed at developing effective treatments for meth users.

I am also pleased that the CJS appropriations bill provides funding for the

COPS meth program to assist local law enforcement obtain the equipment they need to safely and effectively clean up meth labs. I was very disappointed that the President proposed cutting the total COPS program by 96 percent and the meth portion of the program by 62 percent. Fortunately, the Appropriations Committee rejected the administration's proposal and included over \$60 million for the COPS meth program, which is about \$5 million more than last year. Since 1994, New Mexico has received over \$68 million in COPS grants and more than \$860,000 specifically under the COPS meth program. The administration also proposed cutting the HIDTA program by more than 50 percent, from \$226 million to \$100 million. These cuts, if enacted, would have significantly impacted our ability to fight the importation of meth from countries such as Mexico. Thankfully the Senate rejected this proposal as well.

However, I believe that we should also be focusing more on prevention by educating youth on the dangers of using meth. Along with enhanced law enforcement, prevention and education are key to combating meth. My amendment would provide funding for grants to law enforcement and health and school officials to carry out meth education prevention efforts in schools across the country. This funding could be used by local officials to tailor curriculum to the needs of their local communities and purchase the materials they need to educate youth on the dangers of meth.

According to ONDCP, there is a 95-percent chance that a first-time meth user will become addicted. Once kids get addicted there aren't a lot of treatment options and they often face tough criminal sanctions for using the drug. We need to emphasize education prevention efforts so we can stop people from going down a hard-to-reverse path riddled with crime and devastating health effects.

Because the consequences of meth use are so visibly evident, such as rotting teeth and open sores, students will likely be more receptive to such information than with other drugs, such as marijuana, that are normally the target of drug education prevention efforts in schools. The ingredients used in the production of meth, such as battery acid, antifreeze, kitty litter, lithium batteries, also create an opportunity to make children understand the dangerous nature of this drug.

According to a report issued this month by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, SAMHSA, there were 583,000 current users of meth in 2004 and 1.4 million persons ages 12 and older have used meth in the past year. By providing additional resources for prevention and education, I believe that we can make considerable headway in fighting this terrible epidemic, and I am glad that the Senate has acted on this important measure.